



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### **State Health Department Urges North Dakotans To Test Their Homes for Radon**

BISMARCK, N.D. – In conjunction with *Home Indoor Air Quality Month* and *National Radon Action Week*, the North Dakota Department of Health is urging residents to test their homes for radon and to fix any radon problems that are discovered.

Governor John Hoeven has proclaimed October 2008 as *Home Indoor Air Quality Month* to encourage North Dakotans to learn more about indoor air quality issues. *National Radon Action Week* is observed across the country each year to draw attention to radon as a serious public health issue and to motivate Americans to take action to protect themselves from the health effects of radon.

Radon is a colorless, odorless and tasteless radioactive gas formed when uranium in the soil breaks down. Radon is a health hazard that is present in high levels in about 60 percent of North Dakota homes. According to the National Academy of Sciences, radon causes between 15,000 and 22,000 lung cancer deaths in the United States each year.

“Because you can’t see or smell radon, people tend to minimize the health effects and ignore the possibility that radon may pose a problem in their homes,” said State Health Officer Terry Dwelle, M.D. “However, radon is a serious health hazard that – once discovered through testing – can be fixed easily.”

Testing homes for radon is simple and inexpensive. Radon test kits that meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency guidelines are available at your local public health unit, the American Lung Association of North Dakota, your local hardware store or online. Radon problems can be fixed by qualified contractors or by the “do-it-yourselfer.”

For more information, contact Justin Otto, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.5188.

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